



THE
BUNCH OF VIOLETS

BY MRS. CAMERON

LONDON
HOULSTON AND WRIGHT
65, PATERNOSTER ROW.



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BY MRS. CAMERON

AUTHOR OF

"EMMA AND HER NURSE," "MARGARET WHYTE,"

"THE TWO LAMBS," ETC.

NEW EDITION.

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ELLEN was sitting, one day, at breakfast with her papa and mamma and two elder sisters, when a letter arrived requesting her mamma, to go immediately, and visit a sick friend.

When she had read the letter, she said to her children, "I cannot hear your lessons to-day, but you must come up stairs with me and help me to pack up."

The children were much pleased to be so employed, though they were very sorry to part with their mamma; and when they were up stairs, the two elder ones made themselves very useful. The eldest could do many things without being directed; and the second followed the directions that were given her: she sat still when she was not wanted, she made no noise, asked no needless questions, and pulled nothing about; but Ellen, I am sorry to say, was

extremely troublesome. The bustle that was in the house put her in such high spirits, that she did not know what to do with herself. If her mamma sent any body down stairs, she must go too; and she made a great noise as she ran about. Then she stood before her mamma when she was thinking about what was to be done, asking her every minute, how she could help her, and saying, "What shall I do now, mamma?" And she unfolded many of the things that were taken out of the wardrobe to be packed up, if they looked at all pretty, and moved them out of their places; and she clapped her hands when she saw the post-chaise, that was to take her mamma away, coming along the road; and said she wished she was going too: then she laid her hands on the window-frame, and jumped up and down, and became so very noisy, that her mamma was obliged to desire her to leave the room.

Ellen was not willing to go, and, if her mamma had not been very busy, she would have seen that she had a very naughty face. But Ellen's elder sister took her hand, and led her into the nursery, and she said to the nursemaid, "Please to take Ellen out a walking with the babies, for she makes a noise, and is very troublesome to mamma."



The nurse was putting on little Mary's bonnet and tippet; and when she had done this, she said to Ellen, "Now, Miss Ellen, please to bring me your bonnet and tippet, and I will tie them for you."

"I do not want to go out," answered Ellen: "I would rather stay in the house and help mamma."

"You do not wish to help your mamma, Miss Ellen," said the nurse.

"Yes, I do," said Ellen.

"Then," said the nurse, "you would be glad to leave her, if you found that your being in the room with her was a hinderance to her. I am afraid that it is a little pride, and not

a wish to be useful, that makes you unwilling to leave the room when you are desired."

Ellen made no answer, and did not go to fetch her bonnet.

"If you will come with me, Miss Ellen, like a good girl," said the nurse, "I will teach you a pretty lesson about the trees; such a one as I heard your mamma give your eldest sister, one day, when you were a baby, and I was carrying you out a walking."

Ellen now put on her bonnet and tippet, took her little brother Thomas's hand, and went with the nurse into the garden; and the nurse carried the baby. It was a fine morning in the early part of March. Many of the trees were beginning to bud, and several spring flowers were in bloom: the crocuses, yellow, blue, and white, opened their petals like stars.

"And now, nurse, for your lesson," said Ellen: "what are all these trees to teach me?"

"A very pretty lesson, if you will please to learn. Pray tell me, Miss Ellen, the names of the trees that grow in this early border?"

"O, that I can soon tell you," answered Ellen, pertly; "and, perhaps, better



than *you* can tell *me*. There, behind, is a cedar—a cedar of Lebanon, you know, a fine tall tree. And the one with those beautiful pale green shoots, and little red buds, is a larch; it grows up like the spire of a church. And there is a round lilac tree with last year's blossoms hanging upon it; and its sister, that nice drooping laburnum. I call it its sister, because it grows so often near it, and its pretty yellow blossoms suit so well with the colour of the lilac. And that is a wild cherry tree; but it bears not good fruit. And there is the tree we make necklaces of—I forget its name—O! a mountain-ash."

"These are all rather tall trees; are there none lower?" said the nurse.

“O yes, in front. There is a laurustinus, and an Alexandrian laurel, and a Persian jessamine.”

“And what do you see still lower, almost on the ground?”

“What do you mean? These flowers here are crocuses; and here are the pink-and-blue hepaticas peeping above their dusky leaves.”

“You see,” said the nurse, “here are trees and flowers growing all together, of different heights, and sorts, and kinds; and all live pleasantly together. None says to the other, I am better than you; and none says, I am discontented with my lot.”

“The cedar does not want to be a Persian jessamine, and the Persian jessamine does not want to be a cedar,” said little Thomas, with a pleasant smile: “I understand you.”

“But,” said Ellen, “the cedar tree is the tallest. If I was to be a tree, I should like to be a cedar.”

“Miss Ellen,” replied the nurse, “that is because you are not of a contented disposition, and this comes from pride. You are a very little girl, and you want to be treated like one of your elder sisters; and so you make yourself very uncomfortable, and very useless. If you would be contented to be

like one of these pretty humble flowers, you would be very pleasant and agreeable in your way: but while you are proud, you will never be useful to any body."

Ellen made no answer, but was silent for some time, thinking over what the nurse had said; and I should hope that her thoughts were right, and that she prayed in her heart for wisdom from above to shew her the truth. She walked all round the garden, with the nurse and her brother, without once speaking. At last she came again to the place where the cedar grew; and she stood still, and said, "Nurse, I do not wish to be a cedar now. Which of these little flowers shall I be?"

"I will shew you what you shall be," said the nurse, leading her to the front of the house, where the soft turf was bounded by a hedge of laurel which formed in one part into an arbour above a sloping green bank. "What are these pretty leaves growing on the sunny bank?" asked the nurse.

"O," said Ellen, "they are the leaves of the violet, the pretty white violet, that smells so sweet, even when its pretty white petals are withered and dead."

"Then you shall be a violet, Miss Ellen," said the nurse. "Instead of the tall cedar, you shall be humble and lowly; and then



you will make yourself useful and pleasant, like the violet, which people love to put in their bosoms."

"That will be nice," said Ellen: "I will be a violet!"

"Our Saviour teaches us lessons from flowers," said the nurse; "and you must look at the violet, and think it says unto you, 'Little Christian lady, put away all high proud thoughts, and be content to be useful in the way God has appointed you.' For St. Paul says, in his Epistle to the Philip-pians, *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*" (Phil. iv. 11.)

"Look!" said little Ellen, "look, nurse! I do think there are some violets in bud

among the green leaves! O, nurse! shall I get them for mamma to put in her bosom and smell sweet as she goes along?" The little girl stooped down, and soon found violets enough to form a little nosegay for her mamma; and she jumped about for joy, and made Thomas smell them, and the baby, and the nurse.

Just then she saw her sister at the window of her mamma's room, who made signs to her to come up stairs.

Ellen went up joyfully, and tried to tread very lightly.

Her mamma wanted her to go several errands for her: and as soon as these were finished, she sat down upon a little stool, waiting till her mamma should want her again.

"I will not stand up," she said to herself, "for fear I should be tempted to run about—and I will get a pin, and prick a picture upon a bit of paper, that I may not fidget and make a noise. No, I will not do that: I will watch what my sister and mamma are doing, that I may learn to be of use, like they, if I ever should grow up to be a cedar tree; but I am not a cedar now, only a violet."

In a little while, Ellen was wanted again; and as she ran about without making any

noise, and did not pull any thing about, nor ask any questions, she was allowed to remain in the room till her mamma was quite ready to go. And her mamma smiled several times when she looked towards her; and she said, "Little Ellen is not troublesome now, she makes herself useful to her mamma."

At last all was ready, and the carriage was at the door. The children followed their mamma down stairs; and when Ellen received the last kiss from her, she put the little bunch of the first sweet violets into her hand. Her mamma was pleased, and as she travelled along the road which took her from her own home, she often smelt the flowers and thought of her little girls at home.

As Ellen returned into the house, she stopped before the violet bank; and she said, "Thank you, pretty violets, for the lesson you have taught me: I mean to be a violet too for a great many years; and I will try to be useful and pleasant, in a humble way, like you. For I know that *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble.*" (1 Peter v. 5.)

Little children who read this story, do you too try to learn wisdom from the trees and flowers, when you walk about in your



pleasant gardens. Our blessed Saviour once said to his disciples, *Consider the lilies of the field.* (Matt. vi. 28.)

All the works which God has made, are designed to instruct us in heavenly wisdom.

Those kind friends who walk with you will teach you many lessons from trees and flowers: but the lesson I would impress upon you now is, to live in peace one with another as the trees and flowers do in your garden, and to be contented with the situation in which God has placed you: for whether you are a tall cedar, or a lowly violet, there is a duty appointed for each of you.

FINIS.

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